

Chevy Chase, Maryland 20015
September 26, 1968

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Dr. Paulo C. A. Antunes
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Brasil

Dear Paulo:

Dr. Oswaldo da Silva was here last week and brought some of the news regarding smallpox eradication in Brazil. I have also heard from him, or from Dr. Musa, that a boat arrived from Porto Velho at Manaus with Aedes aegypti breeding on board. This would suggest that the Amazon Valley is becoming reinfested, or that it has already been reinfested.

The Amazon river boat problem is a difficult one which was solved thirty years ago by the requirement that all ships be provided with a system of tubes leading from the upper deck to the bilge water through which insecticide could be poured without interfering with the cargo. It seems almost certain that this measure has been abandoned long ago.

I am also told that the special yellow fever agreement No. 21,434, of May 23, 1932, which proved so useful in furthering the eradication of aegypti from Brazil, has been abolished. It seems that the present program for the eradication of aegypti from the reinfested areas in Brazil is working under difficulties.

The Aedes aegypti program in the United States has been drastically curtailed, with the budget being cut back from \$16,000,000 to about \$6,000,000. This cut will, of course, lead to the dismantling of the present service, with the cancellation of all, or most, of the state contracts. With the demand of Congress for large cuts in the over-all national budget, it was inevitable that the aegypti program would suffer. I have been led to believe that the report of your Commission did not influence the amount of the cut.

We have recently received considerable documentation on the ovitrap. The claim is made, and with this I cannot but agree, that the ovitrap examined weekly is a more valuable indicator of the presence and distribution of Aedes aegypti than is the larval search when conducted only every two or three months. I find it difficult to visualize a long drawn-out eradication program with repeated applications of insecticide without a careful immediate follow-up of missed breeding in the treated areas.

My attention has come to the March 1968 report of the campaign for the eradication of Aedes aegypti in the Americas, printed in the September 1968 Boletín of the Bureau.

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I can hardly believe that the last report from the United States was in March 1966, and that the information given is simply to the effect that 649 counties were inspected since the beginning of the campaign in 1964, 248 of these counties were found to have aegypti, 30 counties were worked, 30 counties were checked, and 30 counties still have aegypti.

I must admit that the United States performance with Aedes aegypti during the past five years is one of the greatest disappointments I have ever experienced.

With kind personal regards to you and your entire family, I remain

Sincerely yours,

Fred L. Soper